

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A steering column apparatus comprising:

a steering column provided with a steering lock mount portion on its outer circumference and supporting a steering shaft rotatably;

a steering lock having a lock key for latching said steering shaft and a contact ~~portion~~surface that is in contact with a first part of an abutting surface of said steering lock mount portion of said steering column; and

a lock bracket having a contact ~~portion~~surface that is in contact with ~~another~~a second part of the abutting surface of said steering lock mount portion, said contact ~~portion~~surface of said steering lock and said contact ~~portion~~surface of said lock bracket embracing said steering lock mount portion of said steering column,

wherein ~~the steering lock mount portion of said steering column abuts at least one of said steering lock and said lock bracket with an abutting surface having a non-circular cross section~~at least one of the first part

and the second part of the abutting surface of the steering lock mount portion has a cross-sectional shape of variable radius, with the corresponding one of said contact surfaces being of a shape complementary thereto.

2. (Currently Amended) A steering column apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said first part of the abutting surface of said steering lock mount portion ~~abuts said steering lock with~~ has a part-circular cross section.

3. (Previously Presented) A steering column apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said steering lock mount portion is plastically formed by a bulge process.

4. (Currently Amended) A steering column apparatus according to claim 3, wherein said steering column ~~includes an~~ includes a plastically formed portion other than said steering lock mount portion, and said plastically formed portion is plastically formed by a bulge process simultaneously with the steering lock mount portion.

Claims 5-6. (Canceled).

7. (New) A steering column apparatus according to claim 1, wherein both the first part and the second part of the abutting surface have a cross-sectional shape of variable radius.

8. (New) A steering column apparatus comprising:

a steering column rotatably supporting a steering shaft and provided with a steering lock mount portion having an abutting surface on its outer circumference;

a steering lock having a lock key for latching said steering shaft and a contact surface complementary to and in contact with a first part of said abutting surface; and

a lock bracket having a contact surface complementary to and in contact with a second part of said abutting surface, the steering lock being attached to the lock bracket such that said contact surface of the steering lock and said contact surface of the lock bracket embrace said steering lock mount portion,

wherein said abutting surface has a non-uniform shape in cross-section such that said abutting surface and at least one of said complementary contact surfaces

cooperate so as to prevent relative rotation between the steering lock and the steering column.

9. (New) A steering column apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said first part of said abutting surface has a part-circular cross-sectional shape and said second part of said abutting surface has a cross-sectional shape of variable radius.

10. (New) A steering column apparatus according to claim 8, wherein said steering lock mount portion includes a bulging portion of said steering column.

11. (New) A steering column apparatus according to claim 10, wherein said steering column includes an additional bulging portion plastically formed simultaneously with the steering lock mount portion.

12. (New) A steering column apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the contact surfaces of the steering lock and the lock bracket have cross-sectional shapes of variable radius.

13. (New) A steering column apparatus according to claim 8, wherein one of the contact surfaces has a cross-sectional shape of constant radius, and the other of the contact surfaces has a cross-sectional shape of variable radius.